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## About Face for Foreign Missions?

THE foreign missions enterprise is faced at this moment with the greatest crisis of its history. The crisis is not wholly one of financial support, though the promotional literature of most mission boards devotes a large amount of space to that aspect of the situation. Nor is the most urgent problem that of recruitment of foreign missionaries; the quality of volunteers appears to be higher now than it was some years ago, and their number, except in some special categories, generally exceeds the financial resources available.

Rather, the crisis in the missionary movement arises principally from political, economic and racial revolutions in many parts of the world. The tendency of most established movements is that of protecting interests and attempting to maintain existing programs, despite drastic changes in the environment. The missionary enterprise is no exception to this generalization; it has been in many respects a highly successful venture, and its investments in non-Christian lands have risen to an impressive sum. But recent events require a thorough reconsideration of policies and a drastic reorientation of effort, in several areas of mission activity.

Traditionally, a large part of missionary personnel and money has gone to the Far East. Churches in the United States in particular have focused their attention there. In the comparative absence of American colonial territories, the Orient has seemed a proper field for American missionary endeavor, and 56% of missionary personnel and 51% of missionary funds from Protestant bodies in North America were sent to Asia in 1938, according to a study by Dr. M. Searle Bates. This concentration of effort has been defended in various ways: 1) there are several times as many people in Asia as in the other mission fields, and hence more potential converts; 2) Orientals, the heirs of ancient civilizations and united into great nations, were assumed to be more valuable and stable prospects for conversion than (for example) Africans or Arabians; 3) American contacts with the Far East were developed earlier than were relations with other mission fields (the slave trade is happily forgotten!); 4) other

nations have held political hegemony over other mission fields, but the Orient has been comparatively open to American influences.

These arguments may have had validity at one time—though several of them appear to have been rationalizations of a program stumbled into. In any event, the situation in the Far East is not drastically changed. To be sure, Japan is now more open to American influences than ever before, and mission effort there has properly been intensified. But the most important fact in the Far East is that the Communists have overrun China, and the prospect is that Christian missions will be required to repatriate a large number of their missionaries and will lose a large percentage of their investments in colleges, hospitals, mission stations, etc. To be sure, the fact of Communist mastery in China does not necessarily mean that fellowship with Christian China should be broken off, or that Christian missions should be voluntarily withdrawn—the missions stayed there during the era of war lords and that of Nationalist corruption, without approving the political regimes. But it is clear that mission activities will continue in China only at the tolerance of the Communist authorities. Evidence from other nations that have fallen into Communist hands indicates that at last the Christian centers will become directly subservient to the new rulers, or else their property will be expropriated and their alien staff members imprisoned or expelled. Faced with these decisions, the missions will almost certainly collapse, in one way or the other. Fortunately, a strong nucleus of indigenous Christians has been established, and the Christian witness may be kept alive through them, though they comprise only a minute fraction of the total population.

At the same time, Europe has declined almost unbelievably both in domestic economic strength and in colonial power. Thus the financial base for European missions in many parts of the world, and especially Africa, has become increasingly insecure, just at the moment when these areas have emerged as the most promising missionary fields.

Another development is of even greater moment:

India has become politically independent, and there are great waves of unrest and portents of early struggles for independence in many parts of Africa. A missionary movement which is basically controlled by personnel from despised European powers (and belonging to the white race) is viewed with growing suspicion by the potential native converts and by the new African leadership. Many African leaders feel that "in the showdown, most of the missionaries will be against us."

The missionary movement, therefore, forces a double necessity: 1) that of deploying its funds and personnel in a new pattern consistent with the internal changes in mission fields, and 2) that of re-orienting its program in order to relate the Christian Gospel effectively to the aspirations and the emerging movements of self-expression among the indigenous peoples. Too often and too long the missions have sought primarily to 'do something for

the natives" from the advantaged position of "European civilization." And they have done much. But now the "natives" intend to do a great deal for themselves, and missionary paternalism will not be tolerated very much longer. Instead of "going down to" the non-Christian peoples, Christians must learn how to "come up with" them. Concretely, this means that mission education must help to train leadership—Christian leadership—in greater numbers and to higher levels than ever before, and most specifically for the new tasks independence brings; missionaries, even if officially non-political, must view with personal sympathy the legitimate aspiration of their native followers; every trace of racism must be obliterated from mission programs, like the un-Christian plague it is.

Those of us who stay at home have the same imperatives; the news of what we are travels faster than the missionaries we send out.—L. P.

## "Optimism, Pessimism, and Advent"

JOSEPH E. McCABE

### *Optimism*

**R**ADICAL optimism looks out upon this world and says, "We can make this place to be heaven on earth." In its most chirpy moments and in its most childish statement, radical optimism repeats the words: "Every day in every way things are getting better and better." There are few who can accept optimism in this juvenile form. However, the mature faith of the radical optimist is no more realistic. For him the perfect society which will achieve perfect justice is possible on this plane of existence. The radical optimist will have nothing to do with the faith expressed in the hymn, "City of God, how broad and far." He is sure that the City of God is to be built by the hands of man.

This is the central affirmation of the optimist. He believes the *summum bonum* will be the product of man's genius and of man's making. Utopia is possible if we just put our minds into making its blueprint, then put our shoulder to the wheel that will carry us toward it. In other words, Utopia comes up out of man's dreams and man's efforts. Confident humanists have always held to this faith, overtly or covertly. It is a faith which goes as far back as Plato and is as modern as Moscow. It is a faith which is broad enough to include the high-minded and liberal philosophy of the Golden Age of Greece and the low-minded and reactionary philosophy of many modern devotees.

The modern apostles of "Utopia Now" find expression in the philosophy of Communism. Com-

munist is in many ways the secular man's alternative to the Kingdom of God. This is true because it believes that perfect justice can be achieved within the sphere of man's finite existence. In this sense it is radically optimistic. Communism's hymn urges us to "throw off our chains" and to live in the free and perfectly just society which will come when the corruptions of a Capitalistic world have been overcome. Its City of God is not broad and far, but very near at hand. Its Kingdom of God is totally limited to this world and is to be perfectly realized in the here and now.

The kindest thing that can be said of the Communist's form of optimism is that it is naive. It holds that all tensions and injustices are caused by economic and social maladjustments that inevitably flow from the Capitalistic system. That these do exist in a measure no one will deny. But to make any economic system the scapegoat for the ills of the world is a too superficial analysis of man's predicament. It neglects the deeper causes of our situation such as man's innate acquisitiveness, his love of power, and his capacity for self-deception.

Self-deception was never so clearly demonstrated as in the slogan "a classless society" which the Communist would create. He does not realize this is ultimately an impossibility, for the leaders of the classless society become one class and the great masses become another, with infinite stratification from top to bottom. We may change our names from Capitalists and workers (a false distinction),

to leaders and followers, which is scarcely an improvement. A more radical indictment on the basis of accumulating evidence would be that the new classes become masters and slaves, though this critique endeavors to avoid the polemic. The hard residue confronting all optimists is that we are never as virtuous as we believe ourselves to be, nor can any one system exhaust the causes of our troubles.

The second criticism of these Utopian apostles, when they are historically informed, is that they are intellectually dishonest. They are not the first planners of Utopia in history. In every Utopia, the planners have become tainted with the evil they purported to destroy. History stands for mute evidence of Lord Acton's dictum, "Power corrupts, and total power corrupts totally." Much of Lenin's thinking was pure idealism on a high and noble plane. By the second and third generation of apostleship it has degenerated into power politics. Ultimately, present-day leaders of Communistic thought know the history of radical optimism and thus in perpetuating its errors, under the guise of pure motives, they are dishonest.

Their primal error of organization is that no check is provided for the leaders. No criticism is possible. They are above judgment. Any system which forbids self-criticism and makes judgment upon itself impossible has sown the seeds of its own death. Their error in anthropology is that sin is held to be simply a historically conditioned response of man. Their faith is that when the historical situation is corrected, all man's responses will be pure. The error in organization forgets that judgment is necessary to life, while the error in anthropology is a too naive explanation of man's predicament in sin.

It is necessary to go to the root of these false premises, for only then will the radical optimist among us recognize himself. There are many among us who disavow any zeal for Communism but who entertain Utopian dreams just as unrealistic. Of course it has always been a beguiling thought that we were to save ourselves. Our minds, our strong arms, our selflessness, our generosity, these and a host of other virtues were to redeem us. The tragedy is that so many have lived through the first half of the twentieth century but have not been able to read the lessons history is teaching.

These softer Utopians have not felt the thrust of Dostoevski's insight: "Sodom and the Madonna dwell together in the human heart." They concentrate on the Madonna. They fail to realize that every historical advance raises man's stature but also sharpens his claws. It is fairly obvious now that we have moved toward a higher standard of living, and toward the possibility of extinction. But it is a hard lesson, and our liberal culture has not specialized in hard lessons. We still neglect the

historically authenticated fact that man's noblest motives are never pure, and the holiest of human hands are stained.

With this historical insight, look into your own heart, and you will recognize that the perfect society, embodying perfect justice and perfect love, is not to be created by such a creature. Nor is it to be achieved by any group of such men, however high-sounding their ideals, or however sincere their profession of honesty and selflessness. This is the tragic position of the modern, sophisticated mind. Having emancipated itself from what it thought was the absurdity of religion, it now gives itself to all manner of absurdities about the possibilities of human achievement.

This modern optimist, non-Communitic for the moment, forgets the inevitable fact that man stands both in nature and above nature. As part of nature, he has all the lower instincts of greed and self-interest. As he stands above nature, he is capable of generosity, self-denial, and noble service. Modern man obscures the former in order that he may revel in the latter. This is because having thrown out the idea of God, he must fulfill himself within himself, and within history, if only by denying that part of himself which he would conveniently like to overlook.

He can be Utopian only by denying part of reality, which is not being very realistic. Utopians seldom are. There is no one so despairing as a disillusioned optimist, whether he has been romantic about himself, or Utopian about society. He has looked into the human heart and called it good. Then when evil emerges, he is without support, and optimism gives way to despair.

### *Pessimism*

The pure pessimist holds that all reality is essentially evil, but his tribe is few. This is an honest form of pessimism, but few can live by its basic assumption. The sidewalk pessimist, whose number is legion, looks out upon the world and says, "What's the use?" What he really believes is, there is no hope for a radical betterment of the human situation. He doesn't say this, for he must keep his courage up, if only by denying expression to what he really believes. Most pessimists therefore want their poison in small doses. Here are a few in capsule form:

"Of course I believe in the Golden Rule, but business is business."

"The ecumenical movement is a good thing in principle, but the churches in this town are too narrow."

"Let's hope the UN works, but you know what happened to the League."

The primal error of the softer pessimist is that he



generalizes from one particular instance of evil and says all is evil. He has seen a black sheep, and so all sheep are black. Further, he wants to believe the worst, for this will establish him as a prophet, and he conveniently overlooks all evidence to the contrary. He dwells on the Sodom in every human heart and in every human situation, neglecting the Madonna.

The hard pessimist is the erudite man who has read history. He knows that civilizations rise, have their day in the sun, and pass from the stage. He looks forward to the day when our civilization will go "the way of all flesh." We may get a temporary reprieve, but we are doomed. He neglects the renewal possibilities always open to any civilization which truly repents and seeks to fulfill its task. This comes too much under the heading of religion, a concept which he rules out of court, and thus passes judgment unto death upon himself and upon any civilization which accepts his philosophy.

Someone has said that total pessimism is limited to those with acid stomachs and to philosophers. This simply means that a physical disability can color one's vision of the world, and naturalistic philosophers find no ultimate meaning in life or the universe. Of course, if one were to discover the total meaning of life in this universe, he would have to know of its creation, its sustaining power, and its ultimate destiny. Since he cannot know these truths through his own unaided reason, the pessimist assumes they do not exist. He can be pessimistic only by living as though his assumptions were ultimate truth, which is quite an assumption. Nevertheless, he is able to make the assumption because he has no source of truth outside his own mind, and the experience he has had in the world. He has looked at the world and found it meaningless. He has looked into the human heart and found it evil. Then when goodness emerges, he is cynical, because he knows that evil will soon swallow it again.

### *Advent*

At the Advent season the optimist does not speak, nor does the pessimist. No man speaks. But God speaks. What does God say at Advent? "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings." What are God's good tidings? "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

When the radical optimist realizes he needs a Saviour, he is no longer naive about himself or about society. He hates the word "saviour" because he wants to be his own saviour. But if he can hear the word of God at Advent, he can understand how the best of men need salvation. They need it, not only to inherit life in the next world, but they need it to make them intelligent about life in this world. It is the good news of Advent, the

good news of a Saviour, which measures the depth of evil in the human heart, a dimension of reality the optimist has conveniently overlooked.

Advent, or God coming into history, denies the possibility of man's creating Utopia by his own efforts. It reveals that our best intentions are clouded with self-interest. Further, it should act as the corrective for all who have been deceived by the false gospel of power. Power corrupts, unless that power is held as a gift of God, and as a sacred trust. When the Christ of Advent stood before the power politician, he said, "You would have no power over me unless it had been given you from above." Let the leaders of the "classless society" learn this and their power can be baptized into good ends. But where man is judge of his own power, without a divine judgment upon it, then power corrupts. Advent is the good news that all power is of God, and when wedded to faith in God, can be used for beneficent ends. But the wielder of power still needs a Saviour, and the coming of the Saviour is the good news of Advent.

The good news of Advent for the pessimist is even more profound. The pessimist is right, man is sinful and evil. The pessimist is wrong in thinking there is no help available. Advent is the good news that the God who created man has not cast him off because of his sin, but still wants to deal with him. Advent is the good news that God will take the initiative in effecting this reconciliation.

Furthermore, Advent proves the pessimist wrong about our present civilization. The erudite pessimist has consigned our civilization to the ash-heap, along with all the other civilizations of history. Advent is the good news that this civilization can be renewed, if it will repent of its sins and turn in faith and obedience to the Lord of history. This renders progress possible, and makes extinction not a logical necessity but only the alternative to repentance.

There is an Advent hymn which sets forth a corrective for the naive optimist and a hope for the despairing pessimist:

"So even I, and with a pang more thrilling,  
So even I, and with a hope more sweet,  
Yearn for the sign, O Christ, of Thy fulfilling,  
Faint for the flaming of Thine advent feet."

That is to say, the pang of sin is even sharper than the pang of pessimism. But the hope of Advent is sweeter and more sure than the hope of the secular optimist. Advent is God's word that we need not sell out to the secular Utopian, and become in the end disillusioned. Nor need we close ourselves to pessimism about ourselves or the world. For we are still His, in spite of ourselves, and the world He created He intends to see redeemed. This is a high doctrine of Christmas. Who can hear it? It gives man a solid ground for his hope. The sin which

corrupts his best achievements can be overcome, not by man, but by the Saviour-God. The pessimism which threatens every soul at some time is dispelled in the truth of Advent. Man is not alone. Renewal is always possible.

The Christian is never beguiled into thinking life can be perfectly fulfilled on this plane of existence. Conversely he is never so discouraged by life in this world that he doubts of its ultimate fulfillment at all. He therefore labors to make this a more abundant life, but he never identifies the best on this earth with that which God has in store when history is consummated. The Christian knows that in every dark hour there is the possibility for the in-break of God. Therefore he is always hopeful, but not optimistic. His hope is centered on a more sure foundation than the fickle goodness of man. It is centered in the unsearchable goodness of God, in whose hands his own life rests, and who holds the

reins of history. The perfect fulfillment of life and history is not man's achievement but God's gift.

The conclusion of the matter rests with God who has spoken in history and in Scripture. He is the God of Advent. Specifically, He is Christ, the God-Man of Advent. As Scripture has it:

"We have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eyewitnesses of his majesty."

In the light of His power and coming, we accept our task in this life under the apostle's admonition:

"... take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts."

At Advent, let the optimist and the pessimist take higher ground by joining in the New Testament prayer, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

## The Degradation of Conscience

DOMINIC DE GRUNNE\*

THOSE who have never had an occasion to live under the Communist regime cannot bring an empirical judgment to bear upon the system, upon its social achievements and its contribution to people's happiness. The majority of the information which is brought to us is so partial and fragmentary that it is difficult to attach any credit to it without sacrificing honesty. In general, the Occidental Christian can only form a direct opinion of the realities of Communism (we are not speaking about its theoretical principles) by means of the friends he may have in the Party, and through the books and newspapers which he happens to read.

Among the impressions created by these various contacts and sources, one of the most painful is that of the destruction of independent personal judgment. And it is here that Communism repels one at the outset. Either we see friends prostituting their intelligence to political demands, or we discern how mechanically the Party literature subordinates thought to social dogmas which are interpreted according to the historical evolution of Russia. Instead of considering scientific facts objectively, for instance, such degraded thinking imposes conclusions determined by *a priori* interpretations.

Is it not true that the main bases of human conscience, and one of the sole guarantees of its peace, is the respect for truth arrived at by strict observation, by honest reasoning and by authentic artistic

intuitions? This respect for truth implies a continual readjustment of thought and the reconstruction of provisional formulations as soon as they are found to be in opposition to the new data.

From this viewpoint, we must admit that the churches too have been agents of intellectual confusion in the periods in which they imposed blinkers upon thought to prevent it from deriving profit from new facts. Never forget Galileo, Richard Simon and many others. When Christians refuse, even for reasons which appear to them to be appropriate, to bow before factual truth, they are lacking in respect toward God, and are in conflict with a fundamental principle of their religion, which knows that Truth on a transcendental level has God as its name.

The Communist Party on the contrary, as we see it at work, subordinates on principle every value to its materialistic social organization, without caring for the objective truth. It distorts the facts, calling black white, it warps that which is right, if that is tactically convenient, and forces everything into the mold which it has designated as absolute. How often are its adherents obliged to look without seeing, to stop their ears so as not to hear, to stifle their intellect for fear any forbidden idea might penetrate it, and (like the most narrow-minded theologians) to reject the evidences that do not fit in with the official doctrine.

Communism is today the most degrading mirage for the conscience, now that Fascisms are temporarily dethroned. The "American way of life," insipid as it is, still leaves some opportunity for the development of the Spirit, and does not exclude a variety of interpretations. The social-democracies

\* The writer, a Belgian Benedictine, is editor of the review *Esprit et Vie*, from which this article is taken. It represents the interests of that growing group within European Catholicism which does its theological thinking in close relation to contemporary political realities, and in awareness of the work that Protestant theology is doing.

can develop themselves on the spiritual as well as on the social level, for they respect the individual personality and allow freedom of expression. But Communism closes all issues and imposes the totalitarian doctrine of the Party upon all levels, no matter at what price.

## II

This reduction of thinking to slavery has manifested itself in a particularly horrible manner in these past years, reaching a point of a deliberate degradation of conscience. The trials of Petkov, Mindszenty and the Bulgarian pastors, coming after numerous trials of the same kind, organized according to a technique which has become a routine, were its most offensive manifestations.

It is no longer simply a matter of destruction of personal judgment through censorship and slogans, but a real disintegration of consciences by procedures that send the victims rolling at the feet of the prosecutor while whimpering excuses and denying all they believed in before.

There will probably always be societies which make an absolute authoritarian claim over the thought and initiative of individuals. We must always rebel against them. Today it is Russia, before that it was Nazism, and before Nazism it was certain clerical monarchies. But the tortures of the Inquisition and of the "most Christian" kings never developed a system designed to disintegrate the conscience of their enemies, and to oblige them to confess publicly the opposite of their convictions, with the intention of degrading them in the people's opinion and in their own eyes. The Old Regime tortured or burned non-conformists, which in our liberal opinion seems a horrible procedure; but being Christian, it acknowledged to each one an immortal soul, made in the image of God. It did not seek the systematic disintegration of human personality.

But the Communists do not worry about the human soul, for they subordinate the individual conscience to the "interests" of the collective group. Basing their actions on the scientific knowledge and spirit of our time, they have no scruples about using the most efficient methods of reducing all moral resistance. Odious as it is to make martyrs of men for the sake of the Christian ideal, it is even more unbearable to see them not only tortured, but deliberately degraded for a purely materialistic ideology.

The conjunction of these two sinister factors, violation of human personality and the new religion of the Politbureau, justifies the most energetic reaction. One of the bases of this reaction must be the defense of *habeas corpus* and the opportunity for each person to adhere to what he sincerely believes to be the truth.

These principles are common to the Western Socialists and to most of the Christians, at least for the time being. Accompanied by the necessary social and economical reforms, they must unite the forces of the West for the defense and extension of their conceptions of life. We cannot speak of a Christian Europe, for that would be an ambiguous notion. Europe has only Christian minorities that are divided among themselves. The European spirit, though integrating certain values given by the gospel and the church, can hardly be defined as Christian. However, it is only those who believe in God through Christ who have a more absolute faith than the Communists. It is necessary that their monotheism be purged of its national, social or intellectual fetters, in order to find its effectiveness again.

In the actual conditions, Christians can no longer rely upon earthly forces, nor be dependent upon any political party, country or dynasty. They must rely upon the intensity of their spiritual life founded upon the church, Bible and the sacraments. This inner strength will give them the hope of resisting the violence of Stalinism. The day is perhaps close in which they will be able to rely on nothing else, every visible hierarchy being temporarily destroyed or paralyzed. (*Translation by Martin Kieffer.*)

## Communication

Dear Sir:

Concerning your editorial [*Christianity and Crisis*, October 31, 1949] regarding the refusal of the Convention of the Episcopal Church to seat women delegates, may I comment for the sake of honesty?

When you try to point out that the convention was trying to refuse admission to women, would it not be fair to point out that women delegates did go to the convention in their meetings of The Women's Auxiliary? As a member of the Lions International, I would not want women in the club, but that does not say or infer that the Lions International is against the emancipation of women. Those who belong to the Masons do not allow women to their meetings, but provide a sister organization for them. The church, making room for the contribution of its lady members, does provide groups and committees through which they make their contribution to the church. Part of that work is left to the men also. The men perform their duties at the convention, and so do the women, as witnessed by their meetings at the General Convention, and the great service held by them for the United Thank Offering.

If you happen to think that the Episcopal Convention is denying women the right to work in the church it is because you have not followed what the women do. It is not a case of being exclusive, but being practical. Consider the business transacted, and you will understand that.

Conventions such as Lions, or the Masons could let



women do the same work, but it happens to be done by men. It is not a case of being exclusive, but again practical. If I wanted to join the Junior League, they would think me strange, and not permit it. Yet I do not think they do not believe in the emancipation of men.

Please do not think I put the Christian church on a level with Lions or Masons, but since the women of our church are held back, and since they are given and have their own work to do, and since they do such a grand job of it, I feel that you did not paint a fair picture of the Convention.

KENNETH W. KADEY.

Williamsville, New York.

## The World Church: News and Notes

### British Hierarchy Plans Drive To Shift School Burden

The Roman Catholic hierarchy of England and Wales has put forward a plan for reducing the cost of reorganizing and building Catholic schools under the 1944 Education Act. Under the present regulations, the cost would be 60 million pounds, or \$168,000,000.

According to the 1944 Act, Roman Catholic and other denominations must pay 50 per cent of the cost bringing church schools up to standards prescribed by the law.

The Catholic bishops propose instead that Catholics should lease their schools to education authorities at nominal rents or rents sufficient to cover any mortgage interest and redemption. Under this arrangement education authorities would assume responsibility for all expenditures.

The bishops' proposals, it was announced, will be made the subject of an intensive national campaign to be launched in connection with the elections next year.

Under the bishops' plan, education authorities would be given the sole power to regulate the secular curriculum in Catholic schools, but religious education would remain unchanged. The church would surrender the right of Catholic managers to appoint teachers, but all teachers would be subject to approval, as regards religious belief, by Catholic representatives.

Secularist and Free Church groups are expected to voice strong opposition to the proposals, which are intended to shift the greater part of the 60 million pounds expenditure from Catholic to public funds.

Both groups are especially critical of the plan whereby Catholics would surrender the right to appoint teachers, but retain the right to have teachers in their schools approved by Catholic representatives.

The suggestion that rents payable for Catholic schools would be sufficient to cover mortgage interest and redemption is opposed as meaning that the state will pay off mortgages and thereby pay for part of the original capital expenditure.

On the other hand, the Catholic hierarchy not only claims that its solution is just and reasonable, but has voiced confidence that parliamentary candidates will be impressed by it.

**Editor's Note:** We regard the writer's comparison between the Christian church and such men's organizations as the Lions International and the Masons as very revealing. No one is accusing the church of denying the women the right to work. The accusation, on the contrary, is that they do most of the work and are denied the right to vote.

We ought, in fairness, to add to our critical editorial that the House of Bishops voted to seat the women, while the House of Deputies refused. All sorts of interesting conclusions can be drawn from this: one of which is not compatible with our thesis about the conflict between the priest and the woman.

"Though it may be argued that this proposed solution would involve an additional burden upon public funds," a statement by the bishops declared, "it must be remembered that the state receives, and has received over many years, the benefit of the schools Catholics have provided from private money.

"Furthermore, the people, often very poor, who subscribed the money were, in addition, bearing the full share of rates and taxes which support schools provided by the state."

"Thus," the bishops added, "those who cannot conscientiously accept undenominational teaching for their children have been, in effect, penalized—they have had to pay twice over, and both payments are today much heavier than in the past."

The hierarchy meanwhile expressed the willingness to consider any other solution put forward. When the 1944 Act was passed, the cost to Catholics was estimated at ten million pounds (\$28,000,000), but this figure is now generally accepted as having been a gross under-estimate.—Sydney C. Lucker, *Religious News Service Correspondent*.

### The Church-State Law in Czechoslovakia

*The following short survey of the Czechoslovak churches was written by a former member of the staff of the World Council's Reconstruction Department who studied at the Jan Hus School of Theology in Prague during the past year. (Mr. Bock is now at Yale Divinity School.)*

The recent decision of the Czechoslovak Roman Catholic hierarchy to give qualified support to the new state-church law is the end of one chapter in a complex series of adjustments between the churches and the Communist-dominated state. For centuries, Roman Catholicism has been the official church, and the voluntary giving of its members has been small. Hence, the hierarchy accepted the government's offer of support—even with the strings attached—"because of the pressure of external circumstance."

The Protestant churches, on the other hand, have had a history of struggle for acceptance and recognition. Their members give greater voluntary support to their

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churches, yet most of them would be hard put to live on these means entirely.

Initial opposition to the proposed law came over a year ago when two Protestant churches, the Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren and the Lutheran Church of Slovakia, objected to certain aspects which infringed upon the churches' freedom in spiritual, administrative and material matters. Then the Roman Catholic Church opposed it too, and the bill was shelved for a time along with a lot of other unfinished business over which the state and the Roman Catholic Church were at odds. Finally, the law was put into effect without waiting for agreement.

The Roman Catholics form about 70% of Czechoslovakia's population of 12,000,000. Protestants form about 10%. The Protestant churches which have been receiving state aid are: the Lutheran Church of Slovakia (450,000 members), the Reformed Church of Slovakia (180,000), and the Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren (350,000). The latter grew out of a merger in 1918 of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches in the western provinces—Bohemia and Moravia.

The small Protestant Churches which have received no state aid are the Baptists, Congregationalists, Metho-

dists, Moravians and a few others. If these "free churches" are forced to accept state aid, it will be against their will and against their whole historic tradition of voluntary support.

The churches which welcome the new law, and which are included among those who received state support in the past, are the following: Unitarians, Jewish Synagogues (both of which are small in number), Orthodox (approximately 50,000), owing allegiance to the Moscow Patriarchate, and the Czechoslovak Church (nearly a million members). Thus, this group forms another 10% of the population.

The Czechoslovak Church is a unique denomination, existing in no other country. It began in 1918 when the Austro-Hungarian Empire was overthrown. This monarchy had forced Roman Catholicism upon the Czech nation during the counter-Reformation. In the wave of nationalism following the Empire's overthrow, there was a large "free from Rome" movement, and large numbers left the church. Thousands of these people, including priests, formed a new church using the Czech language in their worship and expounding a modernist theology somewhat resembling Unitarianism. They have not joined the World Council of Churches, because the Council's basis involves belief in Jesus as God. At the present time, Czechoslovak Church leaders are strongly in support of the government.

How the new law will be worked out in each denomination is not fully clear. According to recent reports, the Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren, while accepting the new law in principle, has asked for modifications. They do not want required government approval of clergy before appointment, nor do they want salaries paid directly by the state. "Free churches" have thanked the government, but have asked to be "left out" of the arrangement. There are no indications that these objections have been accepted—Paul Bock, *Ecumenical Press Service*, New York.

We have a number of requests from people in Europe and Asia asking for our journal. Some time ago a large number of our subscribers sent in contributions for this purpose. That fund has been exhausted, and because of the dollar situation in these countries it is impossible for the subscribers to renew their subscriptions. Here is a quotation from one such letter: "The position regarding transfer of dollars to America from Nigeria has not improved. It is worse with the sterling devaluation. I must still hope that some American friend will be found who is kind enough to send us used copies." Or might we suggest the sending of \$2.00 for a foreign gift subscription in your name.

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